

§ 106-65.88. Referendum; assessments.

(a) At the request of the certified organization, the Board shall authorize a referendum among cotton growers upon the question of whether an assessment shall be levied upon cotton growers in the State to offset, in whole or in part, the cost of boll weevil or other cotton pest eradication and suppression programs authorized by this Article or by any other law of this State.

(b) The assessment levied under this Article shall be based upon the number of acres of cotton planted. The amount of the assessment, the period of time for which it shall be levied, and the geographical area to be covered by the assessment shall be determined by the Board.

(c) All affected cotton growers shall be entitled to vote in any such referendum and the Board shall determine any questions of eligibility to vote.

(d) If at least two-thirds of those voting vote in favor of the assessment, then the assessment shall be collected by the Department from the affected cotton growers.

(e) The assessments collected by the Department under this Article shall be promptly remitted to the certified organization under such terms and conditions as the Commissioner shall deem necessary to ensure that such assessments are used in a sound program of eradication or suppression of the boll weevil or other cotton pests.

(f) The certified organization shall provide to the Department an annual audit of its accounts performed by a certified public accountant.

(g) For the purposes of the State Budget Act, Chapter 143C of the General Statutes, the assessments collected by the Department under this Article shall not be "State funds". (1983, c. 136, s. 5; 2006-203, s. 25.)